

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed on June 23, 2009, has been received and its contents carefully considered.

Claims 1, 4, 6 and 8 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended. Claim 1 is independent. It is respectfully submitted that no further search and/or consideration is necessary to fully examine the pending claims as amended, because the claims are amended only to address matter of form, and only are amended to adopt the Examiner's suggestions. Therefore, entry and reconsideration of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

The Office Action objects to claims 1, 4, 6 and 8 for various informalities. Claim 1 is amended to obviate these objections, and claims 4, 6 and 8 are proper due to their dependence on proper claim 1. Withdrawal of the pending objections is thus respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 6 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 09-327149 to *Mitsunori et al.* (hereinafter "*Mitsunori*") in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,559,027 to *Arsem* (hereinafter "*Arsem*"), and U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0099472 to *Johnson et al.* (hereinafter "*Johnson*"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites, among other features, that a ball nut does not contact an inner circumference of an external cylinder. As illustrated and discussed by way of example in Fig. 1 and on pages 18-19 of the disclosure of this application, such a

configuration may minimize sliding friction between an outer surface of the internal cylinder 19 and an inner surface of the external cylinder 24, thus ensuring smooth operation of the device. Further, a ball nut 17 disposed within the internal cylinder may include additional components, such as ball bearings or the like.

The Office Action concedes that *Mitsunori* and *Arsem* fail to teach that a ball nut does not contact an inner circumference of an external cylinder, and asserts that *Johnson* taught this feature. In rejecting the above-noted feature, the Office Action asserts that ball nut 52 corresponds to the ball nut recited in claim 1, and that a ball screw assembly 54 is an external structure surrounding the ball nut 52. However, as illustrated in Figs. 2, 3 and 4, *Johnson* teaches only a single cylinder comprising the isolator member 60 and the shell assembly 62 in contact with the ball nut 52, and fails to teach any external cylinder. Therefore, *Johnson* cannot reasonably be considered to teach or to suggest that a ball nut does not contact an inner circumference of an external cylinder, as recited in claim 1.

In view of the above, no permissible combination of the applied references, can reasonably be considered to teach or to suggest the combination of all of the features recited in independent claim 1. Claims 4, 6 and 8 are also allowable, at least for their dependence on allowable claim 1 as discussed above, as well as for the separately patentable subject matter that each of these claims recites.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the pending rejections under §103 are respectfully requested.

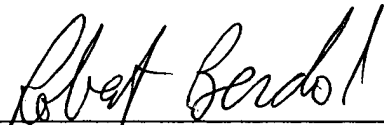
It is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Such action and the passing of this case to issue are requested.

Should the Examiner feel that a conference would help to expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is hereby invited to contact the undersigned counsel to arrange for such an interview.

Should any fee be required, however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the fee to our Deposit Account No. 18-0002, and advise us accordingly.

Respectfully submitted,

September 23, 2009
Date


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